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MONTHLY AREO NEWS

FEATURE STORY

The Visible Church - to use a phrase familiar to theologians - flourished during 1956. The wave of church building rolled on to an all - time high of $773,000,000, according to the Departments of Commerce and Labor. This was 5% more than in 1955. Government experts were already predicting that 1957 would set an even higher goal, an anticipated $875, 000,000. About 2%, or $1 in every $50 spent for construction in the USA, is for Churches.

The Methodist Council of Evengelism heard a report at its annual meeting in December that about 100,000 new Protestant Churches will be needed in the next 20 years. It was also stated by Dr. Fallon, president of that group, that the Methodist Church should try and build at least one church a day for the next 20 years, a total of 7,300.

A million-dollar church is no longer necessarily conspicuous. In addition, many city churches, in planning new buildings, are out to secure sites measured in acres rather than in square feet, in order to provide parking space.

It is standard practice for an increasing number of churches to have duplicate Sunday services, to accomodate what would otherwise be an overflow.

The Statistical Church has also done well. The year's increase in membership, 2.8%, was more than the percentage increase in population. The total in the U.S., for the first time, passed the 100 million mark. 33 million of this total is Roman Catholic and 58 million Protestant.

Two-thirds of the Protestants are in the thirty member Churches of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

Some 268 denominations are shown, but 96% of the grand total of membership is within 53 of the Protestant denominations, with the Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans and Presbyterians composing more than three-fourths of all Protestants.

Progress is church unity was made. The basis of union between the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church was approved by both and the uniting conference is scheduled to meet in Cleveland, Ohio, June 25, 1957. The new church will be called 'The United Church of Christ'.

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the United Presbyterian Church are well on the way to culminating merger efforts, with presbyteries on both sides already voting on the measure. A joint general assembly is contemplated to be held at Pittsburgh in May, 1958. The new church will be called 'The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.'

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Details of the Lutheran advances in regard to mergers are too intricate to be reported in such

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a brief space, but it can confidently be stated that there was definite progress in the movement of the Evangelical Lutheran, The American Lutheran and the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches toward a union to be called 'The American Lutheran Church'.

Abroad, the union movement found expression in conversations looking at least toward inter - communion, and perhaps ultimate union, between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, and also between Methodists and Anglicans in England. Neither of these showed any abatement of the Anglican insistence on episcopacy as an indispensable element in the church.

A record total of 23,432 Protestant missionaries were reported serving abroad for some 213 agencies in the USA and Canada, according to a survey made by the Missionary Research Library. The figure four years ago was 18,576. The survey also showed some $130,000,000 was spent in one calendar year to finance missionary enterprise.(About $5500 per missionary). It was pointed out that over 100 foreign countries are served in, with 35% concentrated in Asia; 29% in Africa; and 26% in Latin America. India leads with over 2100 missionaries in service there; next is Japan with 1560; then the Belgian Congo with 1200. Six out of every ten missionaries are women; 11% of all missionaries are either physicians or nurses. Methodists lead with 1513 missionaries; Seventh-day Adventists next with 1272; Presbyterian Church in the USA is third with 1072. (Mormons and Jehovahs Witnesses were not included, as no figures were available.) Roman Catholic foreign missionaries from the U.S. were listed at 5,126, but no information was available on contributions for their support.

NOTICE TO READERS -

American Review of Eastern Orthodoxy is published as a Monthly News Review. Readers are invited to send in such local or other news as they may wish. Wherever space permits, these will be used.

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Eastern Orthodox Churches saw appeals made to them by two of the Hierarchy in America, for a United Orthodoxy for America.

Archbishops Fan S.Noli,Albanian, and Antony Bashir,Syrian, both expressed themselves as being for a United American Orthodox Church.

In other developments, a 'Protem Committee for the Greater Unity of Efforts of the Eastern Orthodox Church IN America' was organized in St. Louis by the Eastern Orthodox Church Federation of that city. Only time can reveal the extent of what such a work can penetrate into the fixities of Nationalism so rampant among the Orthodoxy bodies in the USA. However, continued perseverance will bring its own rewards.

Back up your opinions with facts - read *AREO !*

AROUND THE WORLD WITH THE CHURCH

Foreign

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATED IN SERBIA in spite of the lack of official recognition. Most of the millions of the Serbian (Yugoslav) Orthodox faithful celebrated Christmas according to the old Julian Calendar, which is 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar. Belgrade was reported to evidence genuine Christmas spirit.

Somewhat in the Christmas spirit, St. Michael's Church (Church of England), Derby, England is to be turned over to the Serbian Orthodox Church there, which has over 1,000 members in eight counties of the Midlands and Northern England. Of course, the transfer is subject to the approval of the Queen of England.

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GREEK ORTHODOX MONASTERY OF ST. CATHERINE ON MT.SINAI UNDAMAGED. The International Committee of the Red Cross announced that one its representatives, Dr. Gaillard, made a Christmas Day visit to the ancient shrine and found it had not suffered in any way. It had been feared the Israel Army might have caused damage during its recent invasion of the Egyptian territory.

Dr. Gaillard said he was welcomed by Archimandrite Christophorus, who told him the monastery had been 'treated with respect' and that 'there was no pillage and all our manuscripts are intact'.

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MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE POSTPONES MEETING WITH WORLD COUNCIL. The meeting, which had been scheduled for the end of January, has been postponed at the request of the Patriarchate. The reason given was that more time is needed to prepare their representatives for the discussion. A new date will be determined thru a further exchange of correspondence.

The proposed get-together had been discussed when the nine-man American delegation of clergy had visited Moscow last March, and again when the Russian Orthodox delegation had made its reciprocal visit to the U.S. last June.

Dr. Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, who is chairman of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, explained that 'the Russian Church does not refuse to revise its attitude toward the World Council of Churches' and that the Russian Church 'found its views on peace now in complete accord with those of the World Council'.

Dr.Fry also had previously cited as an example of continued better relations among Christian bodies the fact that the bishops of the Armenian Apostolic Church had decided in principle that their church should seek World Council membership. The Armenian Church has headquarters in the USSR, but a membership in many parts of the world.

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WAILING OVER 'WAILING WALL'. Israel's two Chief Rabbis protested against the desecration of the Wailing Wall, 'the holiest site in Judaism', which stands in Jerusalem's Jordan controlled Old City.

They charged that Communist propaganda posters had been pasted on the Wall and called upon Jordanian authorities to take effective measures against the 'defilers'. The Chief Rabbis also demanded that effective measures be taken to protect other Jewish Holy Places now in the Arab-held territory.

- The Chief Rabbis are Dr. Isaac H. Herzog and Dr. Yitshak N. Rahamim, who represent the Ashenazic and Sephardic Jews, respectively. ED.

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NEW ROMANIAN ORTHODOX ARCHBISHOP OF IASSY ELECTED. Dr. Justin Moisescu, the Bishop of Alba Iulia and Sibiu and Metropolitan of Transylvania, has been elected Archbishop of Iassy and Metropolitan of Moldavia and Suceava, according to Scanteia, official organ of the Romanian Communist Party.

The Iassy Diocese is considered the 'fortress' of Eastern Orthodoxy in Romania. Dr. Moisescu succeeds Archbishop Sebastian, who died recently. He had previously been made Metropolitan of Transylvania only last March, having previously been a professor at the Bucharest Theological Institute.

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SCOTCHMAN TO PAINT POPE. Leonard Boden, distinguished artist and member of the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian), has been commissioned to paint a full-length portrait of Pope Pius XII, the Vatican Radio announced.

This will be one of the few portraits of the Pope ever painted from life. Mr. Boden has already begun his preparatory sketches, during audiences with the Pontiff.

Mr. Boden, 46, is a native of Greenock, near Glasgow. He attended art schools in Glasgow and London and has exhibited at leading art galleries in Glasgow, London, Birmingham and Paris. Among his most notable portraits are those of Lord Milne (British Field Marshall in World War I) and the Rev. Ronald Selby-Wright, who is a prominent Scottish Presbyterian clergyman familiarly known as the 'Radio Padre', because of his religious broadcasts.

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PHYSICIAN WARNS OF POSSIBLE INFECTION FROM COMMUNION CUP. Dr. G.C.Bending of Vancouver, B.C., Canada wrote to the Canadian Medical Journal that when 50 or more communicants drink from the same vessel 'it is exactly the same, from the hygienic point of view, as if 50 or more people drink from the same wine or beer glass in a tavern'. The doctor pointed out that many of the clergy have the mistaken impression that the alcohol in the communion wine is sufficiently antiseptic to destroy bacterial contamination. 'This and similar fallacies have been the standard clerical replies to the legitimate concern of communicants', he added.

Dr. Bending stated that the same standard of cleanliness demanded of public eating places should be expected in churches. Many diseases 'such as TB, Vincent's angina, the common cold and any infection of the mouth and upper respiratory passages may be spread, by using unwashed containers'. Citing 'tradition' as the basis for using the communion cup, the physician said that, in itself, tradition 'is rarely sufficient justification for anything'. 'I feel it should be our responsibility to attempt to educate the clergy and people in order to effect substitution of individual communion vessels for the present common cup in Anglican services', he wrote.

The Medical Journal referred their readers to a resolution of the 1948 Lambeth Conference, which allows any part of the Anglican Communion to use 'intinction' - the dipping of the wafer into the wine and placing it, in turn, on the communicant's tongue - as the solution.

- Ancient tradition has allowed several methods for communion thruout the history of the Church: Direct communion from the chalice; intinction; sipping thru a metal tube; communion of the wafer only; use of a gold spoon which holds both species; individual cups; and even placing the species on the palm of the right hand of the communicant, who,in turn, communicates himself individually. ED.

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ANGLICAN 'THOUGHTS' ON RELIGION IN RUSSIA were revealed in two separate articles appearing in 'The Church Times' (official Church of England newspaper) and the 'Pacific Churchman' (Episcopal publication of the West Coast of U.S.). In the first article, the Archbishop of York told: 'The exclusion of religion from the schools of Russia continues, and so does the inclusion of propaganda against the Christian Faith, within the school syllabuses.' What does the Church have to say about the State? The Archbishop continued: 'Here we see but one more instance of a recurring attitude in Eastern Christianity - an acceptance of the prevailing order in the State, combined with the preparing of souls.....until this present order has been dissolved. The Church, they would say, is the worshipping colony of heaven; and they are not concerned with politics. They talk of peace; and know no more than the Press and Radio tell them.'

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On Holy Orders, the Primate remarked: 'This much is clear: the question of Orders is, for the Orthodox, subordinate to the question of integrity of faith. If the Orthodox were satisfied as to the integrity of the orthodox belief and faith of the Church of England, then we should be - in virtue of that fact - an acknowledged portion of the one Holy Orthodox Church.'

In the second article mentioned, the Rev. C. Peter Boes writes: 'The strife between Communism and religion is by no means over in Russia.....the greatest effort to undermine the Church is with the young. The Church may conduct no programs of education or other activities with children under eighteen.....The State does not interfere with anyone's going to church....Though the Church is not overtly persecuted, powerful sanctions are applied against her. The government has confiscated all Church property, and buildings are used only with government sufferance... An avid atheist told me that though she had no use for the Church, she was hoping for a church funeral. Another atheist kept telling me: 'Russia is a country with a soul'. When I asked her where Russia got her soul, she only looked puzzled. Another atheist, on a visit of churches with me, called my attention to the fact that the icons of Russia had depth, feeling and meaning. He was taken aback when I said that perhaps it was because the men who made them were men of faith..... Truth and Time are on the side of a Church that has outlived many enemies thru the ages. She has learned to be patient, to pray, and to bide her time.'

- In the history of the world, there has never been a time recorded when Man did not have an abiding belief in some Being - God. The spark of Life never can be snuffed out in Man, insofar as this inherent identity with a Creator is concerned. No system, political or otherwise, can ever emerge triumphant over the Living Spirit of an Eternal God - known thru the ages by many Names, but always everlasting, untiring, Almighty. ED.

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LIFE OF ALBERT SCHWEITZER PORTRAYED IN DOCUMENTARY FILM. An 80-minute film in color, on the life of the famed medical missionary,philosopher and musician, had its world premiere in New York City this month.

The movie, which took five years to make, gives a detailed presentation into the doctor's work at Lambarene, French Equatorial Africa. The doctor is much in evidence thruout the film, especially in the last half, which renders an account of a typical day's work at the jungle hospital. Previous to this filming, the doctor had rejected offers from five Hollywood film companies, due to his reservation that he felt they would be unable to capture the underlying spirit of his life's work. This film, however, he said had caught the spirit and was truly authentic.

- A truly great Christian. ED.

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RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS 1957 - While most American homes had disposed of their Christmas trees by January 6th,1957, thousands of homes were still lighted up in memory of the Birth of Christ. The reason, the antedated Julian Calendar, which is still observed by the remnants of the Old Country Immigrants in the U.S. and their generations of children, with many new 'D.P.s' swelling their ranks. While the great preponderance of these Russian Churches still use the Slavonic language in their Services, some are shifting gradually to English. One of these, in New York City, the Rev.Fr. Joseph Kreta of the Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, is a leading spirit in the Americanizing movement of the Russian Church. A movement which is destined to success within the next fifty years. Other of the foreign clergy, especially those of the old Czarist regime, still cling to their adulation of their homeland and past memories of the 'days of glory' that they knew.

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GREEK CELEBRATION OF EPIPHANY - Occuring almost simultaneously with the observance of Christmas by the Russian Orthodox, Epiphany falls on January 6th each year, the Greek Church celebrated the Day of the Baptism of Christ is Services thruout the land.(The Greek Archdiocese long ago gave up the Julian Calendar for the Western Gregorian Calendar and follow Dec. 25th Christmas observances.) Sometimes called 'Greek Cross Day', Epiphany derives

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that name largely because the day's festivities are highlighted by diving into the waters, by the Greek boys, for the Cross of Gold. The religious symbolism attached to this is said to be the re-enactment of Christ's Baptism, and the struggle to retrieve the Cross is an everlasting reminder of Man's Will to grasp and attain the Truth.

While numerous such observances were seen in Greek Communities thruout the country, the most elaborate and traditional observance is that of Tarpon Springs, Florida. For 54 years this event has been observed in this community with great fanfare and colorful celebrations. This year, 1957, the Most Rev. Kokkinakis, Bishop of Elaia, and of the New England Greek Orthodox Diocese, officiated. Assisted by the local priests, the Bishop presided over the throwing of the cross into the waters of the Florida bayou. A 25-year old fully-clothed paratrooper, John Georgiadis, plunged into the water along with other youths, and retrieved the Cross. Altho ineligible to do so, he nevertheless was accorded the privilege usually reserved for Greek-Americans between 12 and 18 years of age.

In New York City, Airman Nicholas Stergion braved the icy waters of the Hudson River to retrieve the Cross thrown by the V.Rev. David Leon of St. Michael's of the Holy Land Hellenic Orthodox Church.

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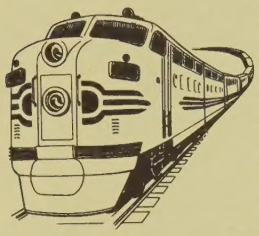

'GOSPEL RAILROAD' TO ENLIVEN SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK. A hobbyist by nature, Bill Richardson, 38-years of age, dreamed an idea that his hobby of 'railroading' could help build Faith in others.

An advertising man, Mr. Richardson is anxious to spread the Gospel among children. Having taught in Sunday Schools, he knows children need an incentive. The incentive is a free ride on a model railroad - The ticket for any child: a Sunday School attendance card from any Church.

The first such railroad is being established in Louisville, Ky. It will have several trains, running thru miniature but authentic cities, mountains, tunnels, etc. Each child will have the opportunity of sitting at the 'throttle' - for each Sunday in Church, the child receives one hour as engineer.

- How about that? ED.

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MINISTERIAL AIR-BARNSTORMING LOCATES NEW CHURCH SITES. Two local Presbyterian ministers have been flying back and forth over Indianapolis roof-tops taking aerial photographs in an effort to solve the increasingly difficult task of finding new church sites in large cities and their fringe areas.

The project has attracted attention from the department of new church development of the Church, which has expressed interest in adapting the technique for use in other parts of the country.

The reason for using the plane was explained: winding roads and dead-end streets in new housing developments make it extremely difficult to reach and study prospective areas. The aerial photographs reveal not only street layouts, but also concentrations of housing and the vacant areas which might be used for church building.

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SERMONS IN SONNET FORM. Rev. Henry C. Spear sits down each week to prepare his sermon, he has beside him a rhyming dictionary. This means that come hail or storm, his congregation at the First Methodist Church, Hartford, Conn. will hear not only a sermon, but also an original sonnet each week. For 25 years Rev. Spear has been carrying on in this fashion. In the beginning he thought it might be difficult to always find the right poem, but, as he says: 'the idea caught on and I have been doing it ever since'.

- A sonnet is a type of poem, having exactly 14 lines and with a metric and rhyming arrangement to conform to set standards. - Rev. Spear really should be nicknamed 'Shake'. ED.

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INGENIOUS METHOD OF FINANCING NEW CHURCH BUILDING. First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, Mo. will soon be in its new $750,000 building thanks to Fred Farrow, veteran of 28 years in the investment field. Mr. Farrow found the professional bankers and fund raisers extremely pessimistic about financing such an expenditure on the existing church budget. But, not Mr. Farrow. He explained: 'I knew from past experience that the donation system wouldn't produce the results we wanted. We have a large number of young people who couldn't afford to lend, much less give, $1000 straight out, but they could afford to invest $200 a year at 5% interest'. Now, after a year and a half, bond sales are nearing the $700,000 mark. Individual investments range from $100 to $24,000.

The annual income of the church will be used to pay the interest and retire the principal, and the bonds will be redeemed at any time in case of emergency. Mr. Farrow figures that the church saved about $34,000 in broker's fees alone, thru the do-it-yourself system.

Said pastor, Rev.Dr. Donald H.Stewart: - 'It's all very thrilling.The bankers said we didn't have a chance, and now we're ready to start construction on one of the finest examples of church architecture in these parts'.

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TEXAS WOMAN CONFIRMED PAINTER OF JORDAN River. Mrs. Mary Cree Cosby of Bowie, Texas claims to have painted more pictures of the Jordan River than any other artist in the world.

Her most recent portrayal of the Holy Land scene was executed for the baptistry of a Baptist Church in the Canal Zone. Her first was painted 20 years ago for a similar location in the First Baptist Church in Bowie. Thruout the years, orders for her work have come from all over the Western Hemisphere. The greatest number came from Texas, but North Carolina churches were second with 23.

She has often two or more murals under way simultaneously. Most of them are 6x11 feet, but she has turned out river scenes up to 16 feet in length. Until last year, when she made a trip to the Holy Land to see the river with her own eyes, she had painted everything from photographs. 'I was happy to find it looked exactly as I'd been painting it for 19 years. Altho some people had told me it is as muddy as the Trinity River in Texas, color pictures I took on a boat trip down the Jordan show it to be a bright blue. I was also pleased to find it had flowers growing right down to the waterline along its banks - just as I've been painting it since 1936.'

- She has painted a total of 310 pictures of Jordan. ED.

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1000 BILLBOARDS TO CARRY SALLMAN' PICTURE OF 'CHRIST LOOKING AT CITY' Miss Jo Peterson, founder of Best Seller Publicity, announced that the billboards will show a compassionate Christ looking over skyscrapers, with the verse: 'Whosoever liveth and believeth in Mr shall never die' S.John 11:26.

'During our 19 years, Best Seller billboards and car cards have gone out to more than 800 cities and towns in America, more than 500 cities and villages in foreign countries - in 23 languages and dialects, and more than 2000 Air Bases and Army and Navy installations. She added: 'only prayer could work such miracles'.

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AIRLINE PILOT INSPIRES TWA TO PLACE BIBLES ABOUT ALL FLIGHTS. Capt. George C.Duvall, a pilot on the Chicago-Los Angeles run, said passenger reaction had been 'very favorable'. He is a deacon of the Fourth Presbyterian Church and a member of the board of managers of the Chicago Bible Society. TWA purchased 200 copies of the King James version from the American Bible Society and placed them alongside the customary reading matter aboard their ships.

CHURCH FIRES THREATEN NUMEROUS STRUCTURES. In a series of spectacular fires, a number of East Coast Churches were either destroyed or partially damaged in devouring flames. Three Church fires in the Boston area, one of them the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in nearbye Cambridge, caused millions of dollars in damages. The sanctuary of the Greek Church was gutted, the other two churches, both Roman Catholic, were, in the case of St.John Evangelist completely,destroyed, and in the other case only partially damaged. A few hours after the fire in St. John's, a telephone threat sent police hurrying to St.Joseph's Cathedral on a bomb scare. Nothing was found. Intensive search revealed an AWOL Army private, who confessed to setting fires in two other Boston area churches. Pvt. Robert Whalen of Somerville, Mass. said he set the Cambridge fire, because he couldn't open the poor box for money he badly needed. He did it, he said: 'in a fit of frustration'.

A few days later, in Trenton, N.J., four Protestant churches were set afire by what police described as a 'fanatic' arsonist. Bottles that had contained gasoline were found at three of the churches. Police are studying a possible connection between these fires and one of nine months ago at St.Mary's Roman Catholic Church, which cost the life of the pastor and two of the housekeepers.

In New Castle, Penna. St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Church (Orthodox) experienced a fire on Epiphany Day, Jan. 6th, which apparently started in the furnace and chimney. A damage of between 15-20,000 dollars was reported. Fortunately, insurance was had against such a contingency. In the meantime, services are being conducted by the Rev.Fr. Daniel Donovan in the nearbye St. Elias Syrian Orthodox Church.

● Commonsense should compel all churches to carry proper fire and liability insurance. The possibility of fanatics cannot always be guarded against. Most people who could commit such an act would be bordering on criminal insanity. ED.

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WEEPING MADONNA ATTRACTS CROWDS. In Sausalito, Calif. a wooden Madonna, on exhibit at the Marin Art Gallery, was found to have a slow flow of sticky substance proceding from the right eye. The artist, Clara Bass, when contacted on the 'mystery' said she might possibly have hit a resin duct in the wood, while making the carving. She used a piece of driftwood for the carving. Crowds of people jammed the gallery to see the phenomena.

● To one familiar with the manner in which the Greek 'Oracles' were worked in ancient days, in Thebes and Delphi, such a manifestation of a natural leakage of resin might well be utilized by a money-hungry priestcraft to bilk the public and play upon their natural superstition and credibility to build up another legend. Spiritual Christians should always have their eyes open to see thru such things and realize the true reason causing the preponderance of phenomena. ED.

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HOSPITAL SUPERINTENDENT BARS 'PATIENT LIST' TO CLERGY. Joseph Friedheim, superintendent of Jameson Memorial Hospital in New Castle, Penna., said hospitals have the right to bar clergymen from going thru their lists of patients 'for information as to the status of a patient, proselytizing or any other purpose'. He stressed that some patients wish to have their visit to a hospital kept confidential and their wish should be respected. For a hospital to reveal their names, without permission, is an invasion of the patients' privacy, said the official. He added that some clergy have been using the filing system for prosélytizing and 'this will not be permitted nor condoned by hospital officials'.

● The hospital official has much to say for his position.(Criminals have been known to make use of many methods of 'exposure' for blackmail purposes). While clergymen can't always be perfect,(two former inmates are known to this editor to be functioning openly as clergy today)they are human beings, few of them would actually seek to make an invasion on the privacy of the sick. But, for the protection of the innocent, perhaps the hospital has the correct solution. ED.

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IN THE COURTS

FAITH HEALER DIES OF POLIO. Jack Coe, Texas Faith-healer, who preached extensively thruout the South, died in Dallas last month of bulber polio at the age of 38. Earlier in 1956, he, and several of his associates, were named defendants in a $150,000 damage suit, brought by parents of a 3-year old youngster, afflicted with polio, whose leg braces the evangelist allegedly had ordered removed. (see AREO for March, 1956). In the suit, the mother contended that she had led the youngster thru the 'healing line' to be cured by Mr. Coe and that Mr. Coe, by ordering the boy's braces removed, had caused him to suffer great pain.

In court, Mr. Coe was shown to head three 'non-profit' corporations, which have a net value of $500,000.

- A twist of fate ? ED.

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GREEK COURT ACQUITS BAPTIST OF PROSELYTIZING CHARGE. John Georgakis,60, a Greek-American, who returned to Greece from the U.S. two years ago, was arrested while distributing Baptist literature. Police accused him of proselytizing by handing out clothing and spreading teachings opposed to those of the Greek Orthodox Church.

Previously he had been arrested several times on the same charge, but always set free because the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of the Ionian Island of Lefkas refused to support the accusations against him. He had also obtained a permit to hold Baptist meetings in the village of Lazaratta on the island, with the Metropolitans permission. On the basis of this, he was acquitted by the court at Lefkas.

- In ancient days the Greeks were known for the freedom of expression allowed among the orators of those days. Perhaps the Metropolitan leans more to those days than to the thinking of some of his contemporaries. Light is not afraid of shadows. ED.

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UKRAINIAN PRIEST CLEARED OF CHARGES OF SHORTAGE IN CHURCH FUNDS. Rev. Leo Weselowsky, pastor of the Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church of St.Volodimir, N.Y.C., was completely exculpated of any imputation of wrong-doing in a decision by the New York Supreme Court, Justice McGivern, after suit had been brought by certain of the Church Trustees to require Rev.Weselowsky to account for alleged discrepancies in rent accounts kept by him.

Hard feelings among the church membership had apparently been developing in recent years, as there was a large influx of new Ukrainian emigrees into the church, which Rev. Weselowsky welcomed, but apparently was resented by the older established members. The dispute erupted with the discovery by the plaintiff trustees(who primarily represent the older membership) of the alleged discrepancies. Rev.Weselowsky offered to resign, but the majority of the members rallied to his side. At the trial, 'expert' testimony of accountants evidently followed strict 'party lines', since Judge McGivern directed an impartial survey to be made by an independent accountant, a stranger to both cliques. Judge McGivern found the Rev.Weselowsky to be honest, altho the books kept in an unscientific manner.

The Judge also expressed his reluctance to interfere with the internal affairs of a religious association - but he declared the ouster of the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer of the church to be a nullity, and ordered new elections to be held. Summing up his opinion, the Judge said: '.....the court expresses the hope that they(the parties) will go forward, realizing how inconsonant their past rancor has been with the purposes of the church they all serve and love, and that when they foregather again it will be in a spirit of charity and brotherly love, to the end that Peace once more may sit untroubled in the sanctuary of old St.Volodimirs'.

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However, subsequent to Judge McGivern's decision of last May 24th, the opponents of Rev. Weselowsky brought contempt proceedings against a supporter of Rev. Weselowsky, charging this supporter of violating the court order of May 24th, 1956. A hearing was held before New York Supreme Court Justice Markewich, and in a decision published last July 24th, Judge Markewich held that no contempt was shown, after stating that it was difficult to ascertain what the *charges were. (*Among the alleged violations was the charge that the rights and privileges of the membership were not recognized; and failure to turn over funds and church records to certain of the opponents of Rev. Weselowsky)

- There are several comments most pertinent to observe from these proceedings. Namely, Judge McGivern gave excellent advice in his concluding sentence on the preceding page, which apparently has been ignored. Secondly, the internal affairs of a congregation are of no concern to the courts and any dispute over such matters must be settled entirely within the church itself.* (* Membership of Immanuel Baptist Church, Covington, Ky. vs. Immanuel Baptist Church - decision by Kentucky Court of Appeals, 12/3/56) ED.

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LEGAL BATTLE FOR RUSSIAN CATHEDRAL AWAITS COURT DECISION. An 11-year old legal battle for control of St. Nicholas Russian Cathedral, NYC, was held before N.Y. State Supreme Court Justice Henry Epstein last month. Both the plaintiff (Russian Orthodox Church of North America, Leonty jurisdiction) and the defendant (Patriarchal Russian Orthodox Church in America) claim ownership. The Patriarchal Church, at present, has possession and use of the property.

In November, 1952, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional a 1945 state law giving control of the cathedral to the present plaintiff. It held that the law, passed with the intent of giving control of all incorporated Russian Orthodox churches in the state to the present plaintiff, was a violation of religious freedom. The court remanded the case to the Court of Appeals for a new hearing and a decision 'not in contravention of this opinion'.

The following July, 1953, the Court of Appeals voted to submit the issues to another trial in a New York State Supreme Court.

Philip Adler, attorney for the Patriarchal Church, sought unsuccessfully to postpone the trial pending the arrival of 'two witnesses now in Russia'. This move was rejected by Judge Epstein.

In brief, the two issues, as viewed by onlookers, were: 1. Plaintiff:- shall American Churches of the Russian Orthodox Faith be 'passed over to the Patriarch'....as 'centers of infiltration under the cover of the cloth'. 2. Defendant: - 'The Russian Church always has been under the domination of the State.....it is nothing new. There can only be one Russian Orthodox Church.'.....the sole issue: 'who constitutes the legal authority to this property'. Defendant also argued that church was built in 1903 with $150,000 provided by Czar and Russian clergy and that the first officer of the cathedral corporation was the Russian ambassador.

* * * * *

VERMONT SUPREME COURT BARS STATE AID TO PAROCHIAL STUDENTS. A ruling by the state's attorney general had contended that no private group has a constitutional or other right to have children educated in its schools at public expense; it was this ruling which was upheld by the decision of the State Supreme Court. The ruling and decision resulted in a saving to the state of some $20,000 a year to 96 Vermont communities for state tuition aid for students attending private and parochial schools. Such payments had previously been made where facilities for high-school education were not readily available to the students in question.

- State aid to private or parochial education, however given, will sooner or later, if expanded, lead to a break-down of public education and arise of a strong, and perhaps violent, sectarianism in general social life, which, in turn, could demoralize the American system. ED.

* * * * *

BELIEF IN 'SUPREME BEING' MANDATORY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR' is part of the Draft Law requirement, as enacted by the Congress of the U.S. Three times in the last year this was challenged by 'objectors' and brought to the Supreme Court of the U.S. for hearing and three times the appeals were rejected. In the last attempt, the individual stated he had religious training and belief, but denied this implied a specific belief in a 'Supreme Being'. He contended that the Draft Act discriminates against religious belief by too narrow a definition and thereforviolates the Constitution.

Meanwhile, in California, the American Civil Liberties Union announced it had filed a 'friend-of-the-court' brief with the State District Court of Appeal in support of the Fellowship of Humanity of Oakland, Calif. The Fellowship is involved in a tax suit with local officials over an interpretation of tax exemption. The Fellowship had won the tax exemption case in lower court, but officials of government had appealed the decision. The Civil Liberties Union said that the denial of tax exemption on the ground that 'religion and religious worship MUST include God as an essential deity' is unconstitutional. They further contended that the Fellowship of Humanity 'assays a non-theistic religious humanism....and is widely accepted by reputable scholars in the field of religion....'

- Apparently there seems to be some disagreement between the U.S.Supreme Court and the local and Appeals Courts of California on the idea of inclusion of GOD as an 'essential deity'. The one says it is necessary for draft preferment(Conscientious Objectors); the other appears to consider it not essential for tax preferment(exemption). ED.

* * * * *

CANADIAN JUDGE BARS TESTIMONY BY TRIAL WITNESS who does not believe in heaven and hell. Justice Claude Prevost dismissed a damage action brought by Mrs. Noella Lauzon against Lucien Lemaire in a Montreal Superior Court. Mrs. Lauzon belongs to a sect which does not accept the belief of reward or punishment after death. Under questioning from the Justice, Mrs. Lauzon said she 'believed in telling the truth under oath', but that her religion, while accepting the existence of a Supreme Being, did not hold with the conception of heaven and hell.

The Justice said the appellant could not give testimony because she could not be sworn; and she could not be sworn because 'to be sworn, one must affirm not only a belief in God, but also in reward and punishment after death'. (The Justice said he was quoting from Quebec's Code of Civil Procedure)

- What chance would an atheist or agnostic have in protecting his civil rights or property? ED.

* * * * *

LAYMAN - PREACHER APPEALS CONVICTION FOR UNLAWFUL STREET PREACHING. Thomas Hardy, 58, who holds a license to preach from the Brightwood Baptist Church, of which he is a member, was arrested and convicted in a Greensboro,N.C. Municipal-County Court of street preaching with a permit.

When the case was originally called before Judge William M. Poteat, Mr. Hardy's attorney submitted the case without testimony. He admitted the defendant had preached without a permit but argued that the city ordinance is invalid because the constitution guarantees freedom of religion and of speech and the Bible admonishes its believers to preach. The prosecutor argued the point at issue was not religion, but law, which law is designed to protect everyone's rights and the use of the streets. He said that police powers are involved and the rights of the First Amendment are not absolute. The defendant was convicted and fined and thereafter gave notice of appeal.

Gee. A fella can't even open his mouth without putting his foot in it.

* * * * *

CHURCH AND STATE

PATRIARCH ALEXEI CHIDES 'FOREIGN ECCLESIASTICS' for blaming the Soviet government for the tragic events in Hungary. He stated that those,who had appealed to the Russian Church to intervene with the Soviet government, were 'incorrectly informed' of the situation. His statement was broadcast by the Moscow Radio, and was apparently an indirect way of answering a plea made to him last November by Dr.Eugene Carson Blake, president of the National Council of Churches in the U.S., who had asked the Russian Church to work for the 'avoidance of further bloodshed and oppression' in Hungary.

Dr. Blake's appeal had been answered by Metropolitan Nikolai, at that time, who cabled that the Russian Churches were participating in 'material' aid to 'those who suffer' in Hungary. In commenting on the reply of the Metropolitan, Dr. Blake noted it was the first exchange between American and Russian churches in an international crisis since the Communists came to power forty years ago, and 'the hopeful sign is that it is now possible, as it was not a year ago, for the churches of the two countries to speak to one another. In the continuing efforts of peace this may prove to be even more advantageous in the future than now'.

* * * * *

AIR FORCE PAYS FOR NEW CHURCH. Dedication services were held in the new modernistic Ithaca(Ohio) United Brethren Church, which was built with Air Force funds, earmarked thru special Congressional action, after the former church had been burned as a result of being hit by a high-octane fuel tank dropped from 6,000 feet by an F-51 fighter plane. Judge Advocate General's Office, in Washington, reported this was the first peacetime accident in which an aircraft had demolished a church or charitable institution.

Speaking at the dedication, Rep. William McCulloch (R-Ohio) said: 'At the national level, we are many times charged with wasting money. I'm sure none was wasted in this instance.... I hope this church will do those things as planned by Him on high'.

* * * * *

RECENT LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN WASHINGTON D.C. REGARDING CHURCHES, includes the following =

- Rep. P.Fino and Rep. I. Dollinger, both of New York, sponsored a bill to designate St.Ann's Churchyard (Protestant Episcopal) in N.Y.C. as a national historical shrine. Many early American patriots are buried in the churchyard, including Gouverneur Morris, who died in 1816.
- Senator E.M.Dirksen(Ill.-R.) introduced a bill to exempt parochial school buses from federal excise taxes. This would exempt all motor vehicles sold to religious and non-profit educational institutions.
- Senator W. Langer (R-N.D.) introduced a bill to make duty-free all vestments and similar ecclesiastical presented as gifts to a church, religious, educational or charitable organization.
- A House Ways and Means subcommittee has recommended that private and parochial schools be exempted from paying federal excise taxes, on the same basis as public schools are now exempted. This would be administered as refunds on: purchase price of any article which includes a federal retail or manufacturer's excise tax; on telephone and telegrams ; on railroad, airplane and bus tickets used by faculty or student member, when traveling on school business; on bowling alley, billiard and pool table licenses. The Bill was referred to the full committee.
- Rep.G.R. Ford (R-Mich.) introduced a bill providing that tuition payments to religious schools may be deductible from income tax on the same basis as charitable contributions. He said such tuition payments are made in the furtherance of religion and religious training and should be treated 'no differently than other gifts made for the purpose of furthering religion'.

- Rep. A.J. Multer (D- N.Y.) sponsored a bill which would permit naturalized clergymen and members of religious orders to do long-term work abroad without jeopardizing their American citizenship. Under provisions of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act, naturalized citizens stand to lose their citizenship if they remain away from the U.S. for an uninterrupted period of more than five years. This bill would allow such naturalized citizens to merely appear once a year at an American consulate and register their intent of retaining their citizenship.

- Rep.P.J. Philbin (D.-Mass.) introduced a bill which would allow American missionaries the privilege of buying at commissaries and post exchanges, maintained abroad by the U.S. Armed Forces. He said: 'Our missionaries are doing a tremendous job in many areas..... and I think we ought to do all we can to help them.'

- Rep. T.J. Lane(D-Mass.) and Senator J.S. Thurmond(D.-S.C.) sponsored legislation which would ban the serving of alcoholic beverages on commercial, private or military aircraft. (Note: an alcoholism seminar, conducted at the famed Keeley Institute in Dwight,Ill., made public a report by Dr.Russell Dicks, prof. at Duke Univ., that there are nearly 5,000,000 alcoholics in the U.S. with from 8,000,000 to 12,000,000 other persons affected directly or indirectly by the alcoholism problem)

* * * * *

AUSTRIAN PROTESTANTS PRESS FOR EQUAL RIGHTS. For the last 26 years, Austrian Protestants have been seeking a new law to invalidate the two old laws (Edict of Toleration of Emperor Joseph II some 175 years ago; and the Protestant 'patent' of 1861) and ensure equal rights for Protestants in every sphere of public life.

A Protestant rally was held, at which representatives from all non-Catholic Churches in Austria, many foreign diplomats, officials from the World Council of Churches, and also from the Lutheran World Federation. Apparently what is being sought is the restoration of State support financially to both Church and welfare organizations.

* * * * *

ROMAN CATHOLICS RESIST NIGERIAN EDUCATION PLAN. A new universal primary education plan, initiated by the East Nigerian government is meeting stiff opposition from the Roman Catholic officials, who have denounced it as a 'godless monopoly of education'.

Under the new plan all schools are to be government-controlled, and managed by local officials who are at liberty to invite religious bodies to supply faculty and staff on a temporary basis. The government will make no grants to mission schools, altho the schools will be permitted to continue at their own expense. The Roman Catholic officials claim : 'Secular education is not enough. Education must have a religious basis and a spiritual doctrine of human nature and human destiny'.

- The question is: WHICH religious basis and WHICH spiritual doctrine. ED.

* * * * *

RELIGION FLOURISHING IN ROMANIA, according to a report submitted by a five-man delegation of the Lutheran Church of Denmark, which made an 18-day visit there at the invitation of Patriarch Justinian, head of the Romanian Orthodox Church. This was the first such group from a non-Orthodox Western Church to visit Romania. In the report it was stated that of 18 million inhabitants in Romania, 14 million are members of the Orthodox Church. All of the churches in the country, they said, are under the jurisdiction of the Dep't. of Religious Affairs, which,among other things, sees that there is no propaganda against the Communist regime.

Priests are forbidden to deal with politics in their sermons; no religious education is given in the schools, but the Church is permitted to give such instruction. Church attendance was reported as being very large and evidence of many young people present at worship services. All land belonging to monastic orders, both monks and nuns, has been appropriated by the government and the former membership thereof still practice their vocation, but are physically engaged in weaving, carpentering and making earthenware. Many young girls were reported to be 'taking the veil' and boys from 14 to 18 years of age were seen in seminaries, where they are preparing for the priesthood. (The Danish delegation was headed by Bishop Skat Hoffmeyer of Aarhus).

THE HOLY FIRE. By Robert Payne. 313 pp. New York: Harper & Bros. $5.00

Described on the cover as 'The Story of the Early Centuries of the Christian Church in the Near East' and on the title page as 'The Story of the Fathers of the Eastern Church' this study should really have the sub-title of 'The Story of a Select Group of the Fathers of the Eastern Orthodox Church'.

Embracing, as it does, an enormous concretion of facts - intimate as well as impersonal; of magnitude as well as of the infinitesimal - one finds a panorama of distant lives and events crowded into page after page of lengthy descriptions of the literary works of ten of the early Fathers of the Church. Replete with many excellently chosen quotes from their writings, the author chooses to frequently compare their works with poets and preceding classical or mythical sources, which, in itself, is of interest, but,without greater elaboration as to the intent or purpose,leaves one often in a state of perplexity as to the reason. Off-hand it seems that while the treatment of the stated subject of the book is well-grounded in the lives of the Fathers concerned, there is much left to be said about the underlying economic-social-cultural-traditional causes from which much of the thinking of those days arose. It is true that it is hinted at in places and some threads shown to view, but the broad pattern of an evolving mankind is not clearly revealed in a way which would have benefited his outer aspects of treating such a profound study.

On the whole, however, one must commend Mr. Payne for his effort, and strenuous it must have been indeed. The inner man, of each of the Fathers chosen, is revealed in fine perspective, as perhaps they might well have been. Interesting facts, many of them little known, illumine the text with their highlights. At times one can almost feel the beat of their hearts and the pulsing of their Spirit, so ably do the sentences run. Again, at times, generalizing too much as to the interpretations of Freudian-like ideas,as to these Fathers' feelings and impulses, the author wanders off the track of following the deeply spiritual aspects that made these men the leaders that they were.(Perhaps done deliberately to point up the spiritual in contrast to the human side.)

In likeable story-form, the entire book is well-done, if, as already said, somewhat tedious at times. Well worth the reading by any inquiring spirit after facts and thoughts and truths of men of long ago. As the author says in his last sentence in the book:

> 'To these Fathers is due a portion of the glory in raising the habitations of God; and to them we owe, more than we can guess or ever repay, the strength of our faith'.

* * * * *

First Steps in Bible Reading

In reading the Bible, one should always bear in mind that there are many ways in which one can approach it. Translations galore abound. To read them all, is often impossible. But, to own enough of an assortment should be an obligation of any sincere Christian student. Meanings change with time, space and tongue. Meanings falter and alter even in the mind of the translator. To aid in the 'gathering unto oneself' of a better understanding and perspective, no library should be complete without 'THE GOSPELS' by Kenneth S.Wuest. 320 pp. 1956. This is a translation which has the full English equivalent of the Greek text in modern speech. In other words, it puts the Gospels into the language of the man-of-the-street of the days in which Christ lived. $3.50.

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